

# WETLAND FAQ



## WHO REGULATES THE FILLING OF WETLAND AREAS?

Section 404 of the Clean Water Act regulates the discharge of fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands. Day-to-day administration of the program is performed by the Army Corp of Engineers, in partnership with the OEPA (Ohio Environmental Protection Agency). For further information on the Clean Water Act and how it applies to wetlands, please visit- <http://www.wetlands.com/regs/tlpge02a.htm>.

## DOES A WETLAND MAP EXIST?

Unfortunately, there is not a map that offers an accurate assessment of wetland areas for the purposes of buying smaller pieces of property. Maps available that provide general indications to the locations of wetlands include the National Wetlands Inventory (USFWS), available at the Lucas SWCD or the Office of the County Engineer, and the Wetlands Inventory for Lucas County available at- <http://www.wetlands.utoledo.edu/>. These maps are not regulatory documents.

## SO, WHAT IS A WETLAND?

Federal regulations require an area of land to possess three characteristics to be classified as a wetland- hydric soils, hydrophytic (a plant adapted to grow in water) vegetation, and wetland hydrology. It's important to recognize that wetlands are not

limited to the traditional cattail dominated shallow pond. A multitude of different wetland conditions exist, including areas that are seasonally flooded, but lack standing water for a good portion of the year. Vernal pools, wet prairies, riparian wetlands, and oak swamplands are all examples of wetland types found in Lucas County.

#### HOW CAN I FIND OUT IF A PROPERTY HAS WETLANDS?

If the parcel is wooded, and possesses hydric soils or non-hydric soils with hydric inclusions, it is probable that wetland conditions exist on the property. Soil types for all incorporated and unincorporated areas can be obtained from the Soil and Water office or the Lucas County Soil Survey. Aerial photographs may also generate useful information such as past vegetative cover and areas of standing water.

Inquiring with the property seller may or may not yield reliable information, due to a number of factors. Ultimately, an environmental consultant may need to be hired to determine the presence and location of wetland areas.

#### IF A PROPERTY HAS WETLANDS, DOES THAT MEAN I CAN'T BUILD THERE?

No. You should contact the Army Corp of Engineers to determine if a permit is required and what the conditions of that permit would require.

#### Contact Information-

Army Corp of Engineers, Oak Harbor Field Office, (419)-898-3491  
Ohio EPA, 401 Section, (614)-644-2152  
Lucas Soil and Water Conservation District, (419)-893-1966

#### Associated Links-

Ohio EPA, 410 Section-

<http://www.epa.state.oh.us/dsw/401/401Section.html>

US EPA, wetland site-

<http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/>

